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TO:

Secretary of State

NO:

1636, JANUARY 11, 6 PM

FILE

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WE HAVE READ WITH INTEREST AMB GAVIN'S ACCOUNT HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH DE ROSE ON FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS. DE ROSE, OF COURSE, REFLECTS TO CONSIDERABLE DEGREE FRENCH NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS, ALTHOUGH THESE IN TURN SEEM TO BE BASED ON FRENCH ASSESSMENT OF GERMAN LONG RANGE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES WITH WHICH WE DO NOT WHOLLY AGREE.

AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, WE BELIEVE THAT FRG IS UNLIKELY SEEK DEVELOPMENT OF INDEPENDENT NUCLEAR CAPACITY OR ORGANIZATION OF FRANCO-GERMAN DETERRENT SO LONG AS: 1) IT BELIEVES ITS SECURITY INTERESTS ARE SERVED BY NATO; 2) IT IS CERTAIN THAT US WILL NOT HESITATE TO USE NUCLEAR DETERRENT IN CASE OF SOVIET ATTACK; AND 3) IT FINDS IN NATO REASONABLE SUPPORT FOR GERMAN ASPIRATIONS INCLUDING EVENTUAL REUNIFICATION. IN ABSENCE EVIDENT SHIFT IN US POLICIES OR SERIOUS SPLIT IN ALLIANCE, WE DOUBT, THEREFORE, WHETHER ANY RESPONSIBLE GERMAN POLITICIAN WOULD ESPOUSE PROGRAM ALONG LINE DE ROSE'S VIEWS. IMPLICATIONS OF SUCH A PROGRAM FOR PRESENT PATTERN WESTERN EUROPEAN RELATIONS FOR BROADER ISSUE OF RELATIONS WITH SOV BLOC, AND FOR EVENTUAL REUNIFICATION WOULD INVOLVE VIRTUAL REVERSAL OF EVERYTHING FOR WHICH FRG HAS STOOD.

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-2- 1636, JANUARY 11, 6 PM FROM BONN

NATURALLY, FRG REACTS APPREHENSIVELY TO RUMORS OF PROSPECTIVE SHIFTS IN WESTERN STRATEGY RAISING THRESHOLD AND INCREASING CONVENTIONAL FORCES SUGGESTING REDUCED RELIANCE ON NUCLEAR DETERRENT WHICH IN GERMAN EYES IS ONLY EFFECTIVE ANSWER TO SOV AGGRESSION IN EUROPE. FRG FULLY RECOGNIZES, HOWEVER, THAT GERMANY'S ULTIMATE SECURITY, AS WELL AS THAT OF WESTERN EUROPE, RESTS ON CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH US, INCLUDING CONTINUES COMMITMENT US FORCES IN EUROPE. THIS REINFORCES OUR BELIEF GERMANS WOULD RESIST FRENCH PROPOSALS FOR REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS, PURPOSE OF WHICH WOULD BE PROVIDE MEANS FOR NUCLEAR STRIKE AGAINST SOVIET UNION IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE US WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE DIRECTLY ENGAGED. LAST THING ANY GERMAN POLITICIAN WOULD WISH TO PRECIPITATE WOULD BE DISENGAGEMENT US FROM CENTER EUROPEAN POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS. GERMANS ARE ALSO EXTREMELY SENSITIVE TO PROBLEM THEIR RELATIONS WITH SMALLER WESTERN EUROPEAN ALLIES WHOSE FRIENDSHIP THEY HAVE ASSIDUOUSLY CULTIVATED. THESE ALLIES ARE ALWAYS READY BELIEVE WORST, GIVEN THEIR UNDERLYING FEARS AND PREJUDICES OF RESURGENT GERMAN MILITARISM. IF GERMANS WERE TO MAKE TYPE OF BREAK WITH NATO WHICH FRENCH PROGRAM WOULD MEAN, IT COULD EASILY DESTROY HIGHLY BENEFICIAL SYSTEM OF POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS WHICH FRG HAS CREATED IN WESTERN EUROPE.

WE BELIEVE THIS SITUATION WILL CONTINUE AS LONG AS CURRENT POLITICAL BALANCE AND OUTLOOK PREVAIL WITHIN ALLIANCE. HOWEVER, THIS FAVORABLE CLIMATE COULD CHANGE IF GERMANS BECAME CONVINCED THAT ALLIANCE WAS SPLITTING INTO TWO GROUPS ON ISSUE EAST-WEST RELATIONS INVOLVING BERLIN AND GERMANY AND THAT FRG WAS BEING CALLED ON TO SACRIFICE VITAL NATIONAL INTERESTS TO ACHIEVE EAST-WEST AGREEMENT. IF SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, PRESSURES TO SHIFT TO "HARD LINE" AND FORM FRANCO-GERMAN GROUP WOULD CORRESPONDINGLY INCREASE AND WE COULD EXPECT MUCH CLOSER FRANCO-GERMAN COOPERATION PARTICULARLY IN MATTERS OF DEFENSE. IF CIRCUMSTANCES WERE SUCH THAT GERMANY CONSIDERED ITS LEGITIMATE INTERESTS WERE BEING NEGLECTED BY ANGLO-AMERICAN ALLIES, WE COULD THUS EXPECT PROGRAMS FOR DEVELOPMENT

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-3- 1636, JANUARY 11, 6 PM FROM BONN

JOINT NUCLEAR DETERRENT. IT MIGHT ALSO BE ARGUED THAT IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, GERMANS MIGHT TURN TO NEUTRALISM. BUT GIVEN CHARACTER POST-WAR FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONSHIP, UNLESS FRENCH ORIENTATION CHANGES RADICALLY, NEUTRALISM WOULD PRESUMABLY NOT PROVIDE AS ATTRACTIVE RANGE OF FUTURE POSSIBILITIES FOR GERMANY AS WOULD FRANCO-GERMAN COOPERATION.

DESPITE FOREGOING AND IN ABSENCE MEASURABLE PROGRESS ON DISARMAMENT, WE DO NOT DISAGREE WITH DE ROSE ASSESSMENT THAT GERMANS WILL DEMAND NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON THEIR OWN SOONER OR LATER. QUESTION IS TO DETERMINE CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONDITIONS WHICH WOULD GIVE RISE TO SUCH DEMAND. AS WE SEE IT, THRUST OF GERMAN MOVE WILL CONTINUE BE TO ENSURE THAT NUCLEAR DETERRENT WILL BE USED WHEN AND IF REQUIRED. THIS EXPLAINS RECENT GERMAN INITIATIVE AND SUPPORT FOR ARRANGEMENTS IN NATO TO GIVE OTHER MEMBERS VOICE IN DETERMINING USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND TO ENSURE TO FRG SAME RIGHTS AS OTHERS. THIS IS ESSENTIALLY POSITION TAKEN CONSISTENTLY BY STRAUSS. WE CAN EXPECT CONTINUATION GERMAN INITIATIVE IN THIS REGARD. EXISTENCE FRENCH PRESSURES ON FRG FOR PROGRAM OF INDEPENDENT FRANC-GERMAN CHARACTER MAY WELL BE FACTOR LEADING FRG TO STEP UP ITS EFFORTS IN NATO TO ACHIEVE AGREEMENT ON SOME KIND OF MULTILATERAL CONTROL.

DOWLING

RJT

[REDACTED]